

CLAIMS:

Having thus described out invention, what we claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1 1. A method for navigating between two or more
 2 programs, each program capable of being instantiated to form a
 3 program instance, said method comprising the steps of:
 4 (a) embedding and enabling engine in an origin program
 5 and instantiating the origin program;
 6 (b) invoking the enabling engine for the origin program
 7 instance which is responsive to the origin program instance for
 8 enabling navigation;
 9 (c) interrogating a rule-base and retrieving one or
 10 more conditions associated with the origin program instance;
 11 (d) utilizing said one or more conditions to query and
 12 evaluate data managed by the origin program instance; and
 13 (e) establishing and displaying one or more navigation
 14 paths to a user via a graphical display by utilizing results of
 15 said evaluation.

1 2. The method for navigating between two or more
 2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, the method further comprising the
 3 step of:
 4 enabling said user selection of a navigation path from
 5 said one or more navigation paths thus displayed.

1 3. The method for navigating between two or more
 2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said rule-base includes
 3 one or more actions associated with said origin program instance,
 4 said method further comprising the step of:

5
 6 instantiating a target program, which is a function of
 7 the user selection of the navigation path and navigating to the
 8 target program instance by utilizing at least one of said one or
 9 more actions.

1 4. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, the method further comprising the
3 steps of:

4 storing and retaining a navigation path associated with
5 the origin program instance.

1 5. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 4, the method further comprising the
3 step of:

4 enabling the user to navigate backwards from the target
5 program instance to the origin program instance by displaying the
6 navigation path associated with the origin program instance via
7 said graphical display.

1 6. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, the steps of establishing and
3 displaying one or more navigation paths further comprising:

4 utilizing state data managed by the origin program
5 instance and role of said user for evaluating one or more
6 navigation paths available to the user.

1 7. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 3, further comprising:

3 performing remaining actions from said one or more
4 actions not utilized for executing functionality supported by the
5 target program instance.

1 8. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the target program is a
3 web browser.

1 9. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the rule-base resides on
3 a network.

1 10. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the rule-base resides
3 locally on the user's system.

1 11. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the target program
3 resides locally on the user's system.

1 12. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the target application
3 program resides on a network.

1 13. The method for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the navigation paths,
3 which are established and displayed comprise a workflow for
4 sequentially performing one or more tasks.

1 14. The method for navigating between two or more
2 application programs as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the
3 functionality supported by the target program is displaying a
4 particular web page.

1 15. A system for navigating between two or more
2 programs, each program capable of being instantiated to form a
3 program instance having data associated therewith, said system
4 comprising:

5 (a) a rule-base for storing one or more conditions and
6 one or more actions associated with said program instance;

7 (b) an enabling engine embedded in said program
8 instance enabled for interrogating said rule-base and retrieving
9 said one or more conditions and said one or more actions;

10 (c) said enabling engine including a mechanism for
11 querying said program instance data, evaluating said data against

12 said one or more conditions, and establishing one or more
13 navigation paths; and
14 (d) a display means for displaying said one or more
15 navigation paths to a user.

1 16. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 15, wherein said display means
3 enables said user selection of a navigation path from said one or
4 more navigation paths thus displayed.

1 17. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 15, wherein said enabling engine
3 further comprises:

4 means for instantiating a target program, which is a
5 function of the user selection of the navigation path; and

6 means for navigating to the target program instance by
7 utilizing at least one of said one or more actions.

1 18. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 15, the system further comprising:
3 a means for storing and retaining a navigation path
4 associated with the program instance.

1 19. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 17, the system further comprising:
3 means for enabling the user to navigate backwards from
4 the target application instance to an origin program instance by
5 displaying the navigation path associated with the origin program
6 instance via said display means.

1 20. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 15, the system further comprising:
3 means for utilizing state data managed by the program
4 instance and role of said user for evaluating one or more
5 navigation paths available to the user.

1 21. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 17, the system further comprising:
3 means for performing remaining actions from said one or
4 more actions not yet performed for executing functionality
5 supported by the target program instance.

1 22. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the target program
3 comprises a web browser.

1 23. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 15, wherein the rule-base resides on
3 a network.

1 24. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 15, wherein the rule-base resides
3 locally on a user's computer system.

1 25. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 15, wherein the target program
3 resides locally on a user's computer system.

1 26. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 15, wherein the target program
3 resides on a network.

1 27. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 15, wherein the navigation paths
3 comprise a workflow for sequentially performing one or more
4 tasks.

1 28. The system for navigating between two or more
2 programs as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the functionality

3 supported by the target program is displaying a particular web
4 page.

1 29. The navigation system as claimed in Claim 15,
2 wherein the program is an application program.

1 30. The navigation system as claimed in Claim 15,
2 wherein the program is an executable component of an application
3 program.

1 31. A program storage device readable by a machine,
2 tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the
3 machine to perform method steps for navigating between two or
4 more programs, each program capable of being instantiated to form
5 a program instance, said method steps comprising:

6 (a) embedding and enabling engine in an origin program
7 and instantiating the origin program;

8 (b) invoking the enabling engine for the origin program
9 instance which is responsive to the origin program instance for
10 enabling navigation;

11 (c) interrogating a rule-base and retrieving one or
12 more conditions associated with the origin program instance;

13 (d) utilizing said one or more conditions to query and
14 evaluate data managed by the origin program instance; and

15 (e) establishing and displaying one or more navigation
16 paths to a user via a graphical display by utilizing results of
17 said evaluation.

1 32. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 further comprising the step of:

3 enabling said user selection of a navigation path from
4 said one or more navigation paths thus displayed.

1 33. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 wherein said rule-base includes one or more actions associated

3 with said origin program instance, further comprising the step
4 of:

5 instantiating a target program, which is a function of
6 the user selection of the navigation path and navigating to the
7 target program instance by utilizing at least one of said one or
8 more actions.

1 34. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 further comprising the step of:

3 storing and retaining a navigation path associated with
4 the origin program instance.

1 35. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 further comprising the step of:

3 enabling the user to navigate backwards from the target
4 program instance to the origin program instance by displaying the
5 navigation path associated with the origin program instance via
6 said graphical display.

1 36. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 35,
2 the steps of establishing and displaying one or more navigation
3 paths further comprising:

4 utilizing state data managed by the origin program
5 instance and role of said user for evaluating one or more
6 navigation paths available to the user.

1 37. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 33,
2 further comprising the step of:

3 performing remaining actions from said one or more
4 actions not yet performed for executing functionality supported
5 by the target program instance.

1 38. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 wherein the target program is a web browser.

1 39. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 wherein the rule-base resides on a network.

1 40. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 wherein the rule-base resides locally on the user's system.

1 41. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 wherein the target program resides locally on the user's system.

1 42. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 wherein the target application program resides on a network.

1 43. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 31,
2 wherein the navigation paths that are established and displayed
3 comprise a workflow for sequentially performing one or more
4 tasks.

1 44. The program storage device as claimed in Claim 37,
2 wherein the functionality supported by the target program is
3 displaying a particular web page.